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ABSTRACT

In October 1992, doctoral students enrolled in a community college leadership program at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, were assigned six questions to be answered in collaboration with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), or the CEO's designate, at the 15 community colleges where the students were employed. The questions explored respondents' perceptions of the top issues/problems facing the colleges; the solutions currently being tried or being proposed to address these issues/problems; new campus administrative programs or efforts implemented in fall 1992; new campus curricular and instructional programs implemented in fall 1992; research studies that respondents would like to see undertaken on their campus in fall 1992; and research studies currently underway at the campuses. Study findings included the following: (1) over 50% of the respondents cited inadequate state funding as the top issue/problem facing the college, followed by the need for expansion of present facilities and new facilities, and the need for more progressive and effective leadership; (2) new approaches to budgeting was the most frequently cited solution for dealing with fiscal problems; (3) among the new administrative programs and efforts cited by respondents were early retirement incentives, total quality management, and a support system for black male students; (4) several colleges reported ongoing revision and updating of curricular and instructional programs; (5) among the research of interest to respondents were studies of student retention, and grades and attendance correlation; and (6) five respondents reported not knowing of any research studies currently underway at their campus. (PAA)

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CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS IN TEXAS COMMUNITY COLLEGES

(NOVEMBER, 1992)

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CURRENT ISSUES AND PROBLEMS IN TEXAS COMMUNITY COLLEGES (November, 1992)

INTRODUCTION

In October, 1992, doctoral students enrolled in a community college leadership program at Baylor University were assigned six questions to be answered in concert with the CEO, or his/her designate, at the community college where they were employed.

Following are the specific questions assigned, followed by a compilation of the responses. The responses are from 15 Texas community colleges which are fairly representative as to size, georgraphical location, and complexity.

1. **Please list and describe the top three issues/problems facing your college campus this fall.**

   Inadequate State Funding was listed as a top issue by over 50% of the respondents. Next in importance was the need for the expansion of present facilities and new facilities. The third perceived need was in the area of institutional leadership (need to be more progressive and effective). Several issues/problems tied for fourth place: state-mandated performance measures; planning and effecting quality programs; self-studies and follow-ups for the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; and the ever-recurring parking problem. The next level of perceived problems related to enrollment management, communication on a large campus, plus salaries and benefits. Each of the following was mentioned by one institution as an issue/problem: the volume of federal and state reports, part-time faculty, drugs/alcohol on a residential campus, state-mandated out-of-district tuition, registration process/procedures, faculty evaluation procedures, plus staff morale and equity.

* The numbers in parentheses indicate the number of institutions involved.

2. **In relationship to the three issues/problems you have just described, what major solutions are being tried or will be tried to solve these problems during this academic year.**

FINANCIAL - New approaches to budgeting seems to be the major solution being tried to deal with present day budget problems. More of a bottom-up process in contrast to a top-down process. Analysis and elimination of low production programs and classes are being emphasized. Increased political action at the state-level. Major attempts to increase enrollment, especially during the funding year. Other solutions being tried by at least one institution are: revenue bonds, lay-offs of personnel, smaller salary increases, more aggressive investment practices, and requests for grants.

FACILITIES - Studies as to use and allocation of facilities (2) - development of long-range and short-range plans for facility needs - joint ventures with other entities.

LEADERSHIP - Retirement and replacement of senior administrators - professional development programs - implementation of total quality management concepts (2) - strategic planning - reallocation of responsibilities.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES - Created a V.P. for Institutional Effectiveness - building the requisite data base - improve tracking system.

COMMUNICATION - More department and division meetings - improvement of written communications - trying to help administrators anticipate and understand the ramifications of their decisions.

DRUG/ALCOHOL PROBLEMS - Awareness program - SADD chapter - development of curriculum - counseling - increased security - grant applications.

OUT-OF-DISTRICT TUITION - "reason" with Coordinating Board.

FACULTY EVALUATION - revised and improved entire system.

PART-TIME FACULTY - Reviewing evaluation process - counseling - mentoring program for part-time faculty.

VOLUME OF STATE AND FEDERAL REPORTS - Reduced responses to non-essential questionnaires - concentrate responsibility for reports.

REGISTRATION - Extend registration period - extend hours of bookstore operation.

3. **Please list two major new administrative programs of efforts on your campus this fall. (They should be programs that are in place and being tried for the first time under your administration.)**

Many new and varied program/approaches are being initiated with the emphasis upon:

FACULTY/INSTRUCTION - early retirement incentives - hiring freeze on full-time faculty - minority faculty recruitment - faculty exchange program among campuses of system - multi-media technology lab - competency-based instruction.

ADMINISTRATION/MANAGEMENT - strategic planning - total quality management - decentralization and empowerment - research and evaluation plan - comprehensive plan for the evaluation of instruction - streamlining administrative reports - sensitivity training - new computer software - expansion of staff - resource development office.

AT-RISK POPULATIONS - programs for at-risk students - programs to help community combat teen-age pregnancy and children living in poverty - support system for black male students.

4. **Please list two major new curriculum and instruction programs on your campus this fall.**

Several colleges reported the revision/updating of programs. Some new programs are pending CB approval. Other institutions reported new programs that were being studied/developed. Programs being implemented, funded, or being developed:

- Child Development
- Records Technology (2)
- Aerospace Technology (Electrical Systems)
- Travel and Tourism
- Para-Accountant
- Legal Assistant
- Production/Inventory Management
- Industrial Instrumentation
- Electrical Electronics
- Chemical Technology
- Critical Care Nursing
- Hazardous Materials Management
- Drug Prevention
- Paramedic Technology Mobility (Associate Degree Nursing)

5. **Please list two research studies that you would like to see done on your campus this fall.**

What are the causal relationships, related to retention, that can be controlled? (4)

What are the relationships between TASP and ACT as predictors of need for remediation, success, etc.?

What is the correlation of grades and student attendance?

Do colleges treat men faculty and staff differently from women faculty and staff?

Is Tech Prep working and what model works best?

Does local feeder high school curricula prepare students for freshman-level college work?

How do you incorporate and what are the effects of incorporating students into the college decision-making structure?

How do you evaluate the effectiveness of a campus registration system? How do you assess the climate of a campus and ascertain areas where positive change is needed?

Can computer electronic mail lessen paperwork?

Will adequate secretarial support for instructors and mid-level management increase output?

Will contracting for services like plant maintenance, bookstore, security, etc. save the college money?

Is TASP an effective predictor of college success?

Why do students choose to be in some kinds of groups and not others (student activities)?

How do you assess and predict student housing patterns, e.g. apartments vs. residence halls?

Educational Outcomes. How well do our students learn what they need to know? Are they prepared for transfer and the job market?

We need a good/better tracking system. Who comes, who is successful, who stays? (3)

What is the comparative persistence between day and night students, full/part-time students, and students with different career objectives?

Is competency based instruction working in technical/vocational programs? Is learning up or down? Are we actually measuring competencies? Have we

fragmented the course into specific competencies so that they don't provide overall learning gestalt?

Compare the distribution of funds based on the contact hour formula and the new funding mechanisms
Develop a budget model for the allocation of capital resources.

6. **Describe two research studies that are being conducted on your campus this year.**

None/don't know of any (5)

Perception of college district population of college community theater.

Assessment of all credit instructional programs as to:
1. relationship to college missions and goals
2. need for program
3. outcomes of program
4. enrollment trends
5. program demand on college resources
6. cost vs. income

An overall assessment of campus needs.

All research seems to be supportive of grants. Proposals are being written.

What variables contribute to a nursing student's performance on the State Board Examinations?

Research literature is being gathered on competency-based instruction and Tech Prep models.

Investigating administrative and funding structures of branch campuses in Texas.

What is our institution's potential contribution toward the attraction of business and industry to our service area? How can we enhance the economic development of our service area?

Survey to determine what women's athletics should be implemented.

What is the "value added" to our graduates as a result of their attendance at our institution?

Validation of criteria for placement in math.

Study of our geographic market area as to perceptions of our institution, reasons for attending/not attending, likelihood of continuing/not continuing, utilizing various demographic breakdowns, e.g. sex, ethnicity, etc.

A consulting firm is studying the structure and effectiveness of the college in the district.

Evaluation of outcomes in technical education program.

A study of counseling interventions with high risk students.

Studies of developmental reading program.

Characteristics of students in need of academic remediation.

Comparison of CAI remediation with non-computer assisted remediation in terms of subsequent success in college-level courses.